

CPSC/OFC OF THE SECRETARY
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
1997 AUG 28 A.M.

MEETING LOG

SUBJECT: ANSI Z21/Canadian Gas Association Joint
Subcommittee on Standard for Gas Water Heaters

PLACE: Holiday Inn, Middlebrook Heights, OH

MEETING DATE: August 13-14, 1997

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Donald W. Switzer *DWS*

ENTRY DATE: August 25, 1997

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Donald W. Switzer

ES

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES: See attached attendance sheet

MEETING SUMMARY

The Joint subcommittee consists of representatives of the gas-fired water heater industry, utilities, regulatory agencies, and other interested parties. Its purpose is to provide technical guidance on water heater issues to the full American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z21 Committee on Performance and Installation of Gas-Burning Appliances and Related Equipment. Many agenda items were discussed at this meeting. This meeting log is limited to those items directly pertaining to on-going Commission projects.

Item 4 REPORT FROM WORKING GROUP ADDRESSING SUGGESTED REVISIONS TO REDUCE POSSIBLE IGNITION OF FLAMMABLE VAPORS BY VOLUME I WATER HEATERS (No action requested, for information only)

The purpose of this item was to inform the entire subcommittee of the progress to date in developing revisions to address ignition of flammable vapors by residential water heaters. CPSC staff reported that, to date, it views the progress toward developing standards coverage as satisfactory.

The Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association (GAMA) has developed a draft test method to certify the performance of vapor ignition-resistant water heaters. It consists of spilling gasoline in an enclosed room with an operating water heater under various conditions. If the water heater does not ignite the vapors, it passes the test.

CPSA 6 (b)(1) Cleared

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Products Identified

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The draft test method will be forwarded to the Flammable Vapor Working Group for development into standard requirements. CPSC staff suggested that to save time, when the working group is finished, the test method be sent for letter ballot to the full water heater subcommittee. The subcommittee would then send the test method out for public review and comment. By letter balloting the subcommittee, a meeting cycle is deleted from the standards development process thereby speeding up the process by several months. The chairman of the working group said he would consider that option. Because the draft test method was forwarded to the subcommittee this month, the next meeting of the working group has been scheduled for November, 1997, to allow time for the working group to analyze the draft method.

One water heater manufacturer expressed the concern that the draft test method does not include a test for subjecting a water heater to vapors when the appliance is operating in the pilot-only mode.

Item 6

REVIEW WORKING GROUP REPORT ESTABLISHED TO EVALUATE
THE HOT WATER SCALD ISSUE.

At present, water heaters sold in the United States are shipped with the control preset to 120°F. Water heaters in Canada are shipped preset to 130°F based on concerns about pathogens in the water. At the July, 1996, subcommittee meeting, the subcommittee was requested to change the US requirements to be consistent with the higher Canadian temperature. The subcommittee set up a working group to determine the actual risks of scalds compared against the risk of infection from water-born pathogens.

The working group considered this issue and reported back to the subcommittee that the proper course of action is to maintain the status quo, leaving U.S. heaters preset at 120, and Canadian units preset at 130. The subcommittee adopted this recommendation.

ITEM 7

CONSIDER THE USE OF FLEXIBLE GAS CONNECTORS FOR THE
INSTALLATION OF WATER HEATERS IN CANADA

At present, the use of flexible gas connectors is prohibited for the installation of water heaters in Canada. The Canadian Interprovincial Gas Advisory Council (IGAC) has denied a request to allow flexible connectors in the installation of water heaters because the water heater is a vented appliances, and movement of the water heater could dislodge the vent.

The subcommittee discussed this issue and voted to send a letter to the IGAC supporting the use of flexible connectors for water heaters. The basis for this decision is 1) a filled water heater weighs several hundred pounds, and is not subject to moving; 2) It is inappropriate to use the gas supply line as a means to prevent motion to the water heater because the combination control valve, to which the piping is attached, will not sustain the stress caused by moving the appliance when the gas pipe is rigidly attached.

Item 11 CONSIDERATION OF NEW STANDARD FOR WATER HEATER STANDS

At present International Approval Services U.S. maintains a Requirement for water heater stands (IAS NO.2-96). The purpose of water heater stands is to allow elevation of the water heaters to meet building code requirements. A stand manufacturer requested that the water heater subcommittee incorporate IAS NO. 2-96 into the water heater standard.

The water heater subcommittee supports the need for a standard for water heater stands. However, the subcommittee determined that performance requirements for a stand would be outside the scope of the water heater standard. The subcommittee voted to direct the IAS staff to begin processing IAS NO. 2-96 into a ANSI standard. This meets the need for uniform performance requirements for the stands, and allows the requirements to be used for stands for furnaces, dryers and other appliances that are required in the building codes to be elevated 18" in certain locations in the home.